

Prosecutor: Girls show no remorse

But lawyers say hate didn't prompt attack

By CHRISTINE WALSH
The Patriot Ledger

Three Duxbury girls accused of vandalizing their former teacher's home in December knew they were targeting a Jewish family and have shown no remorse, a prosecutor said yesterday in Plymouth Superior Court.

A note left at the scene said, "That's for not decorating for Christmas" and proves the incident was more than an act of vandalism, Assistant Attorney General Suzanne Glick Gilfix said during a civil hearing to request a preliminary injunction against the girls.

Judge Patrick Brady said he would decide today whether to grant the injunction, which would order the girls to refrain from further harassing the victims or anyone else because of religious beliefs.

The 15-year-old Duxbury High School sophomores sat in the courtroom with family members as their separate lawyers represented them.

Conrad Bletzer, attorney for one of the defendants, said the note doesn't necessarily denote anti-Semitism. Half the homes in Duxbury don't decorate for Christmas for a variety of reasons, he said.

"To me, it's a senseless act of violence: vandalism," he said. "You have three 15-year-old kids who did something ridiculously stupid."

Gilfix said the family was "shocked" by the Dec. 17 vandalism and had never previously experienced anti-Semitism.

"They freely exhibit their religion," she said. "They don't think twice about it."

To get an injunction, Gilfix had to prove the girls are likely to repeat the incident. She suggested the girls may have been involved in a Dec. 3 paintballing of another Jewish home in Duxbury.

Pink paintballs were used in both incidents, and police are investigating whether they are related.

Gilfix said the girls have shown a "lack of contrition" and a "real disdain" for the Massachusetts Civil Rights Act. She said their use of red and green crayons (the colors of Christmas) to write the note showed careful planning.

Defense Attorney Michael Horan said that although the girls have not apologized to the family, they are remorseful.

"Now isn't the time to contact the family," he said.

Horan said the girls will stay out of trouble.

"The possibility of repetition of this incident is zero," he said.

Each lawyer described his client as a good kid without a criminal history.

Lawyers: Girls not prompted by hate

■ TEENS

Continued from Page 1

Bletzer said his client is a straight-A student who plays basketball, softball and field hockey. She has admitted to throwing a rock at the home, but did not know the family is Jewish and did not help write the note, he said.

"She did not know what the note said," he said.

Hodgdon's client is the daughter of longtime Duxbury residents. She plays high school tennis and soccer and typically makes the honor roll.

"This is so totally out of character for this young girl," he said.

Lawyers say this girl threw one rock at the home and wrote the note.

Horan is representing the girl who owned the paintball gun and is accused of shooting four paintballs at the home. Lawyers say the vandalism and the note were her idea.

Her parents have removed her from school temporarily because of personal issues, Horan said. The girl and her parents are devastated by the attention the teenagers have received, he said. Everyone in the high school knows who they are, he said.

"These kids literally have been living in a fishbowl," he said.

Horan said 15-year-olds are prone to making poorly advised decisions, and asked the judge to let the juvenile court handle the punishment.

"This is an unwarranted exacerbation of a situation that involves children," he said.

The Plymouth County District Attorney's office is handling the criminal case. All three girls are charged with malicious damage to property worth more than \$250 and possession of an air gun by a minor. Two of them face separate hate-crime charges for intimidation and property damage.